

09/772,231MS155741.01/MSFTP186USAMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**In the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph on page 6 beginning at line 14 with the following amended paragraph:

The storage component 14 and communication context 18 may reside at one node 22 and the component 16 and context 18 20 may be part of another node 24. However, those skilled in the art will understand and appreciate that such communication elements alternatively could be part of a common node in accordance with an aspect of the present invention. Additionally, more than one storage component and/or communication context could be created in a given node. Each communication context 18, 20 thus may be operative to multiplex messages from one or more respective storage components 14, 16 in its respective node 22, 24.

Please replace the paragraph on page 9 beginning at line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

By way of illustration, the queue pair 60 of the node 56 is associated with a communication context (EEC1) 66 that is connected with a communication context (EEC2) 68 in a second node (NODE 2) 70. The queue pair 60 also is associated with a communication context (EEC3) 72 that is connected with a communication context (EEC4) 74 that resides in a yet another node (NODE N) 76. Thus, the contexts 66 and 68 form a communication channel between nodes 62 56 and 70, while contexts 72 and 74 form a communication channel between nodes 62 56 and 74 76. Each communication context has a context number (e.g., a multi-bit field), which uniquely identifies each context within its associated channel adapter.

09/772,231MS155741.01/MSFTP186US

Please replace the paragraph on page 14 beginning at line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

The queue pair 140 is associated with two different EECs, namely EEC3 152 and EEC4 154. A communication channel is established between the EEC3 152 and an EEC (~~EEC6~~, ~~(EEC5)~~ 156 at the node 124 to enable communication between the queue pairs 140 and 144. Similarly, a communication channel is established between the EEC 154 and an EEC (~~EEC7~~ 158 at the node 126 to enable communication between queue pair 140 and the queue pair 146. In accordance with an aspect of the present invention, the queue pairs 140, 144, 146 and the EECs 152, 154, 156, and 158 are associated, such as to be part of common domain indicated as DOMAIN(2). The members of DOMAIN(1) DOMAIN(2) are isolated from members of DOMAIN(1), such that their respective processes cannot send messages through communication channels in the different domain.

Please replace the paragraph on page 14 beginning at line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 5 depicts an example of a system 170 in which more than one virtual hardware component 172, 174 share an endpoint 176 of a communication channel at a node 178. The virtual hardware component 172 is illustrated as residing in virtual memory of a process (PROCESS A) 180 and the virtual hardware component (174) resides in virtual memory of another process (PROCESS B) 182. The hardware components 172 and 174, which may correspond to a queue pair, a buffer or other suitable storage means, for example, are mapped into the context of the respective processes 180 and 182 in a privileged operation by an operating system (not shown).